

Virginia Outdoors Fund Grant Program

Volume I

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of
Conservation and Recreation**



Department of Conservation & Recreation

CONSERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

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VIRGINIA OUTDOORS FUND
(VOF)
GRANT PROGRAM
(LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND)

The Department of Conservation and Recreation administers a grant-in-aid program for the acquisition and development for public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants are for public bodies only. Towns', cities, counties, regional park authorities, and state agencies may apply for 50% matching fund assistance from the Virginia Outdoors Fund (VOF). These funds are provided through state general fund appropriations, when available, and from federal apportionment from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) that are available for the acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation areas.

The program is a reimbursement program, meaning that the sponsoring agency should be capable of financing the project while requesting periodic reimbursement.

Information herein describes highlights of the program and is designed for minimum application submission. Prospective applicants should note, however, that additional information might be required in order to render a proper decision about individual proposals. Applications for the Virginia Outdoors Fund Grant Program should be sent to the attention of:

Division Director, Planning and Recreation Resources
Department of Conservation and Recreation
203 Governor Street
Suite 326
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2010

For general information, call (804) 786-3218 or 786-4379 or 786-5046.

THE VIRGINIA OUTDOORS FUND PROGRAM

Goal

To facilitate the availability of outdoor recreation areas and facilities for all political jurisdictions and state agencies in the Commonwealth of Virginia

Objectives

- To encourage localities to recognize that public recreation is a valued and needed governmental service.
- To support local jurisdictions in meeting outdoor recreational needs identified in the *Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)*.
- To provide assistance through a grant program to local governments for the provision of outdoor recreation.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Deadline

May 2, 2005

Application Grant Amounts

Application for Grants will be considered in Grant Amounts not to Exceed \$200,000 (\$400,000 or more total cost). The minimum grant amount is \$50,000 (minimum \$100,000 in total cost).

Submit Six (6) Application copies for each proposal

Application awards will be reviewed and recommended by the Board of Conservation and Recreation.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Grant Applicants

All cities, towns, counties, eligible state agencies, and other public authorities responsible for providing public recreation services under the *Code of Virginia*. Private and non-profit organizations are not eligible.

Eligible Projects

VOF grants are available to political jurisdictions for:

- Outdoor Recreation Land Acquisition and Development Projects.
- Outdoor Recreation Development Projects.

General Eligibility

All recipients of grant funds for acquisition and/or development projects will be required to maintain and operate the funded area ***in perpetuity for outdoor recreation use***.

Other than architectural and engineering fees, costs incurred prior to final approval are not eligible for reimbursement. Title to properties to be acquired must not be transferred prior to final project approval.

Eligible Cost Examples

Land Acquisition and Development projects may include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| ➤ Ball fields | ➤ Playgrounds. |
| ➤ Swimming Areas/Facilities. | ➤ Outdoor Court Areas. |
| ➤ Boating Facilities. | ➤ Trails. |
| ➤ Picnic Areas. | |

Support Facilities that primarily support grant application project developments such as:

- Comfort Stations.
- Internal Roads.
- Maintenance and Office Spaces.
(For project facilities only — Not agency departments)
- Parking Areas.
- Other required public facilities needed to support proposed facilities in the application.

Note: Development applications for infrastructure only are ineligible. Inclusion of these items may jeopardize application review and result in rejection and return of the proposal to the applicant.

Appraisals

VOF grant applications involving land acquisition require formal land appraisals. It is very important that applicants obtain the *VOF Acquisitions Procedures Manual* from DCR.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Priority Rating System Criteria

Maximum Score 90 Points

For Information Purposes Only - Not Required for Application Submission

Project Sponsor:

Name of Project:

1. To what extent does the proposal meet recreational needs identified in the *State of Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)* or local plan? **(Maximum Score 10 points)**

- If the recreational use is identified as a need in the VOP and local plan
Score 10 points if project is a specifically identified need in VOP
Score 6 points if project is a general need identified in VOP
- If the recreational use is identified as a need only in a local park plan,
Score 4-5 points
- If the recreational use is not an identifiable need in the VOP or a local plan,
but is part of an existing or new outdoor facility, determine the value
of need and score 1-3 points.

2. If the project proposal meets the following criteria score accordingly **(Maximum Score 10 points)**

- The property is not currently protected by the L&WCF Act, score 2 points
- The project proposal will provide public access to state waters, score 4 points
- The project proposal sponsor is a first-time applicant, score 4 points

3. If the project can be completed within 2 years of approval, score 5 points.

4. Determine site suitability by applying the following standards: Outstanding site conditions: low development cost, low maintenance cost, and no conflict with surrounding land use; acceptable site conditions: may have poor soils, severe slope, possible accessibility problems, or conflicts with existing uses (higher development cost). Score within a range of 5-10 points. **(Maximum Score 10 points)**

5. Can the Sponsor manage the operation and maintenance requirements of the proposed project? Does the sponsor have a good management record? Score within the range of 0-10
(Maximum Score 10 points)

- No Problems - Excellent (10).
- Minimal Problems - Good (8).
- Adequate - Fair (5).
- Poor (0).
- First Time Applicants, Score – 5 Points.

6. Score applicant's administration and compliance with previous outdoor recreation grants. Score from 0–10 points using the following rating:
(Maximum Score 10 points)

- No Problems - Excellent (10).
- Minimal Problems - Good (8).
- Adequate - Fair (5).
- Poor (0).
- First Time Applicants, Score – 5 Points.

7. In terms of ADA accessibility, determine the level of user accessibility among population groups that are physically challenged. Score 0-10 points.

(Maximum 10 points)

Application identifies a project with facilities that will be ADA accessible, score 10 points

Application identifies a project where a portion of the facilities will be ADA accessible, score 5 points

Application does not give information about ADA accessibility, score 0 points

8. Determine the source of the local match and score accordingly: **(Maximum 10 points)**

- If the matching costs are all local funds, score 10 points.
- If at least 25% of the match is from local funds, score 5 points.
- If more than 25% of the matching cost is donated value, score 0 points.

9. In accordance with the VOP, determine the recreational needs the project will support i.e., public access to state waters, hiking and walking trails, bicycle trail, sports fields, and tennis and basketball courts. **(Maximum 10 points)**

Score 7 points for new public access to state waters.

Score 10 points for new public access to state waters and 1 other item.

For 4 or more (non-water) items, score 7 points, for 2 to 3 items, score 5 points, and for 1 to 2 items score 3 points.

10. Rating the application preparation: **(Maximum 10 points)**

- The application is well prepared and provides a concise description of what is to be accomplished, and it includes a project boundary map with metes and bounds.
score 10 points.
- The application has good preparation and provides a reasonable understanding of what is to be accomplished, score— 5 points.
- The application has fair preparation but the proposal needs additional explanation and information, score-- 3 points.

Note: Deduct three (3) points each from the above score if project metes and bounds map is not submitted with the application. See Section B Item # 6.

11. If the park is an existing L&WCF site and the proposal involves the expansion of the park with new lands and developments (involves acquisition & development) that would be contiguous with the existing park boundary and will enhance the public's overall recreational experience at the park Score 5 points

Maximum Total Score 100 points

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

- Applications are reviewed for compliance with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).
- If a grant round has not been implemented, any project application submitted for funding at least one (1) month prior to a Department of Conservation and Recreation Board meeting is eligible for assistance in that same period.
- The Department of Conservation and Recreation staff reviews all applications and eliminates those applications that are clearly ineligible.
- Projects are then reviewed in accordance with the funding philosophy, state and federal program requirements, and the scoring criteria.
- The Director of the Division of Planning and Recreation briefs the DCR director on the status of all available applications eligible for grant awards and offers recommendations on applications that should be presented to the Board of Conservation and Recreation. The DCR director then decides those project applications that will be presented to and reviewed by the DCR Board.
- Applications are presented to the DCR Board for a pro or con recommendation to the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation on grant awards. The Director then makes the final decision at the state level on grant awards.
- If applications require federal approval, the DCR director's recommendations are forwarded to the responsible federal agency for final approval.
- Upon final approval, application sponsors will be required to sign a project agreement before acquisition and/or construction can begin.

REQUIRED APPLICATION CONTENT

Project Narrative

In approximately 3 typed pages explain how the proposal meets *the needs identified in the scoring criteria* and the following project selection criteria:

◆ **Objectives and Need for Assistance**

Identify any relevant physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, or other problems requiring solutions. Demonstrate the need for assistance and state the principal and subordinate objectives of the project. Supporting documentation and/or letters from concerned parties other than the applicant may be used. Any relevant planning studies should be included or footnoted.

◆ **Results or Benefits Expected**

Discuss the results and benefits of the proposal. Identify who will benefit from the recreational and park facilities. Describe who the project will serve. Include demographics, user groups, seasonal usage, etc.

◆ **Approach**

Outline a plan of action pertaining to the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Cite factors that might expedite or slow project development. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design innovations, reduction in cost or time, or community involvement. Identify each organization, cooperator, consultant, or other key individual (s) who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. Attach commitment letters.

◆ **Geographic Location**

Give a precise location of the project and the area to be served on a U. S. Geological 7.5 Minute Survey Map (reduced as necessary). Other maps or other graphic aids should be attached.

◆ **Relationship**

Describe the Relationship between this project and other current, planned, or anticipated federal/state assistance projects.

Environmental Assessment Guidelines

The following eight-point outline should be followed to accurately assess the impact of the project. Narrative explanations should be written for each heading and, whenever possible, impacts should be quantified (e.g.), number of acres of trees to be removed, cubic yards of fill required. For projects with property rights outstanding, the standard environmental information must be expanded to specifically explain how the outstanding rights are to be dealt with and how the participant plans to assure that the environment will not be affected significantly by these rights.

In preparing the environmental information, the applicant should be mindful of the cumulative impact of the action proposed and related actions that are contemplated. The information submitted should describe the project goal and the relationship to the proposed project. The effects of decisions regarding a number of apparently minor projects may be cumulatively substantial. It is possible that a decision made at an early stage to prepare an environmental impact statement on the overall concept could mean that a number of individual projects could be submitted to accomplish that goal without the delay of having to prepare separate impact statements for each project. The environmental information must be accompanied by maps to aid in the evaluation of the project's impact on the environment.

If other governmental agencies have an interest in the project, it is suggested that preliminary discussions be held with representatives of those agencies and that significant comments be incorporated into the assessment. Examples of agencies to be contacted are: State Department of Environmental Quality, State Health Department, Virginia Department of Transportation.

Whenever possible, the subject should be discussed in depth, especially when specific facts or professional opinions are available.

The Environmental Assessment should include:

1) Description of the Proposed Action

This section should state who is proposing the action, the contact person, address and phone number, and what is to be accomplished. It should include such information as the location of the project with appropriate location map attached. It should include the scope of the project, when the action will take place, and if applicable, its interrelationships with other federal, state, or local recreation-oriented projects and proposals. These projects should be identified and discussed. Also, a description of the project and how it complies with the current SCORP should be included.

2) Description of the Environment

This section should include details on the following information:

- a. Description of the overall topography and any special topographic features that may be present. Illustrate with a topographic map.
- b. The name and location of any historic or archaeological sites that will be affected.
- c. Statement of whether or not the project is located within a floodplain, and if it is, the availability of flood insurance.
- d. Description of the site's surface and subsurface geological characteristics and the possibility of important mineral deposits beneath the site.
- e. Description of the soils association in the area, if available, particularly the soils fertility and susceptibility to erosion.
- f. Description of the area's flora (vegetation), including species composition, distribution, commercial utility, and aesthetics. Include special references to rare or endangered species.
- g. Description of the fauna (wildlife) of the area making special reference to rare or endangered species.
- h. Description of existing transportation routes in the area and a discussion of the accessibility of the project site.
- i. Description of existing structures and their utility to the proposed project.
- j. Descriptions of the area's water resources and their relationship to the proposed project including source or if it is potable.

3) The Environmental Impact of the Proposed Action

This section should include an objective discussion of the environmental impacts of the proposed action, including related actions, if any. "Impacts" are defined as direct or indirect changes in the existing environment, whether beneficial or adverse.

Socioeconomic as well as biological impacts should be discussed. Unknown or partially understood impacts should be indicated. This section should include a description of:

- a. Whether the project will affect a site included or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Register of Historic Places and/or whether the project will affect other historic and archaeological sites of state or local significance.
- b. The effect the proposed project will have on adjacent land uses.
- c. The nature of any controversy involved in the project.
- d. The human and solid waste management systems planned for the project and their environmental impact, if any. Cite Health Department comments relating to this subject.
- e. How the water resources will be affected (e.g., increased runoff, general pollution,) Cite available comments from state and local agencies.
- f. The effect on the fauna and flora of the proposed project.
- g. The effects on transportation routes. Cite comments from the Department of Transportation local and statewide engineers.
- h. The effect of the project in providing both short-term and long-range employment in the area.
- i. The proposed management plan for the project and how this will help to alleviate and control vandalism, littering, traffic congestion, and trespassing on adjoining properties.

4) Mitigating Measures Included in the Proposed Action

Unless stated elsewhere, mitigating factors must be included. This section should include a discussion of measures and/or methods that are proposed or will be required to mitigate adverse environmental impacts relating to:

- a. Controversies
- b. Increased runoff, soil erosion during construction, and future soil erosion and sedimentation. Cite comments from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, if available, and document that project work will comply with state and local **Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (s)**.
- c. Increased vehicular traffic to the site.
- d. Increased noise and air pollution as a result of public use.

5) Any Adverse Environmental Effects That Cannot Be Avoided

This section should consist of a discussion of any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented and an analysis of who or what is affected and to what degree (unless addressed in item 3). Discussion under this section may include:

- a. The dollar amount the tax base will decrease as a result of public ownership of the property.
- b. The erosion, compaction, and sedimentation resulting from construction and public use.
- c. The fauna and flora that will be destroyed or relocated as a result of this project.

6) The Relationship Between the Environment and Productivity

The short-term impacts (such as loss of wildlife habitat, relocation of families and/or businesses, changes in traffic volumes and patterns, and added air pollution due to increased auto traffic and construction) should be evaluated as they relate to the project's cumulative and long-term beneficial impacts (such as dedication of land to public recreation and open space and providing recreation facilities for future generations). This section should also include a discussion of the project's impact on energy consumption, air quality, and noise level.

7) Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

This section should discuss any irrevocable uses of resources that will be involved through implementation of this action. This requires identification of the extent to which the action curtails, restricts, or possibly enhances the range of resource uses. Discussion should cover resource extraction erosion, destruction of archeological or historic site elimination of the habitat of endangered species, and significant changes in land use. Discussions under this section should relate to:

- a. The irrevocable commitments of public funds to the project.
- b. The irrevocable commitments of the natural resources such as timber, minerals, soils, water, etc...

8) Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The thrust of this section is to describe the alternatives to the proposed action that are available and should include:

- a. The alternatives including modifications of the present proposal, and different approaches for gaining the same result.
- b. Beneficial and adverse effects of the alternatives, along with the reasons for rejection of the alternatives not selected.

PROJECT BUDGET INFORMATION

PART I - Facility Description and Cost Breakout

All VOF grant applications should include a Facility Description and Cost Breakout. This cost breakout should be an ***itemized listing*** of cost items such as:

- Acquisition of Lands.
- Construction of Picnic and Play Field Facilities.
- Construction of Courts Areas, Trails, and Other Outdoor Recreational Facilities.
- Supporting Cost for Roads, Comfort Stations, Maintenance Facilities, and other facilities that primarily support Outdoor Recreation.
(*Note: such facilities must support the current proposal and not future planned facilities.*)
- Planning Costs – Must be related specifically to the current project proposal and not future proposals or design plans.
(*Note: Planning cost, as a high percentage of total project cost, will cause rejection of the proposal.*)

PART II - Budget Information

1. Grantee Share

a. Securities	\$	_____
b. Mortgages		_____
c. Appropriations (<i>By Applicant</i>)		_____
d. Bonds		_____
e. Tax Levies		_____
f. Non-Cash		_____
g. Land Donation		_____
h. Other (<i>Explain Under Remarks</i>)		_____

TOTAL – Grantee Share \$ _____

2. *Other Shares*

- a. State \$ _____
- b. Other (*Explain under Remarks*) _____

TOTAL – Other Shares \$ _____

3. **TOTAL Non – Federal Share** \$ _____

4. **Complete Project Cost Information**

- a. Grant Request (**Must be 50% or less of total cost**)

\$ _____

- b. Applicant's Share (**Must be 50% or more of total cost**)

\$ _____

- c. COMPLETE PROJECT COST (**Must Sum A & B**) \$ _____

REMARKS

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The application should include a project schedule indicating an anticipated target time frame for each element of work on the project. Typically, this would be a schedule listing time frames on completion of each major work element once final grant approval and final clearance are approved.

Project Approval Information

The following project site information must be included in all applications:

Section A

1. Is the proposed project covered by an approved comprehensive plan? _____Yes_____No

If so, indicate type of plan: _____

2. Will the proposed project be on state or federal land or installation? _____Yes_____ No

If yes, please specify: _____

3. Will the proposed project cause the displacement of individuals, families, businesses, or farms? _____ Yes _____ No

4. Is there other federal or state assistance on this project, either previous, pending, or anticipated? _____ Yes _____ No

5. Is the project in a designated flood hazard area? _____ Yes _____ No

6. Locate the project site accordingly:

- a. House of Delegate District. # _____
- b. State Senate District. # _____
- c. U.S. Congressional District. # _____

b. State Senate District. # _____

c. U.S. Congressional District. # _____

Section B

1. Sites and Improvements: Not Required. Attached as Exhibits.

2. Applicant intends to acquire the site through:

____ Eminent Domain. ____ Negotiated Purchases.

____ Other Means. Please Specify: _____

3. Title or other interest in the site is or will be vested in:

_____ Applicant _____ Agency or Institution Operating the Facility

_____ Other. Please Specify: _____

4. Applicant/Operator has: _____ Fee Simple Title. _____ Leasehold Interest.

_____ Other. Please Specify: _____

5. Applicant/operator has: _____ Fee Simple Title. _____ Leasehold Interest.

_____ Other. Please Specify: _____

a) Length of Lease or Other Estate Interest. _____

b) Number of Years to Run? _____

c) Is Lease Renewable? _____

Attach plat as part of application. The plat must include a metes and bounds map of the project area (2 copies). These are important criterion in the scoring of the application (see scoring criterion item #10). *Note: Acquisition projects do not require boundary maps at the time of application, but are required if the grant is approved.*

6. Description of Facility: _____ Not Required. _____ Attached as Exhibits.

Drawings – Attach any drawings that will assist in describing the project.

Specifications – Attach copies of completed outline specifications.

(If drawings and specifications have not been fully completed, please attach copies of working drawings that have been completed).

GOVERNING RESOLUTION

All VOF grant applications must include a resolution of project support from the local governmental body. A sample resolution is included herein.

Sample Resolution

At the last meeting of the (Project Sponsor) held in the Meeting Room of the (Project Location) on (Date) the following resolution was adopted.

WHEREAS, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), provides funds to assist political subdivisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia in acquiring and developing open space and park lands; and

WHEREAS, there are urgent needs within the (Political Subdivision) to develop park land; and

WHEREAS, this area is deemed of high acquisition and development priority by said (Project Sponsor) and shall be referred to as (Project Title).

WHEREAS, in order to attain funding assistance from DCR, it is necessary that the (Project Sponsor) guarantee that a proportionate share of the cost thereof is available; and

WHEREAS, the proportionate project share (Specify Dollars) is funded by the (Project Sponsor)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE (Project Sponsor that (Executive Officer's Title) is hereby authorized to cause such information or materials as may be necessary to be provided to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and to enter into such agreements as may be necessary to permit the formulation, approval and funding of the (Project Title) Project.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the (Project Sponsor) gives its assurance that the funds needed as the proportionate share of the cost of the approved program will be provided, up to \$ (Sponsor Share).

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the (project Sponsor) gives its assurance that the General Provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (L&WCF) and the Virginia Outdoors Fund Fiscal Procedures will be complied with in the administration of this project.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the (Project Sponsor) will operate and maintain the public recreation facility in good condition and will provide permanent project acknowledgement signs of the participating funding agencies and that this signage will clearly state that the said facility is a "public" recreational facility.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the (Project Sponsor) shall dedicate the metes and bounds of the (Project Name) properties, in perpetuity, for public outdoors recreational purposes in accordance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) Act.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the (Project Sponsor) gives its assurance that all other applicable federal and state regulations governing such expenditure of funds will be complied with in the administration, development, and subsequent operation of this (Project Name).

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Conservation and Recreation is respectfully requested to assist in approval and funding of the (Project Title) Project in order to enhance the standard of public recreational enjoyment for all our citizenry.

Voting on the motion was as follows:

AYES:

NAYES:

ATTESTED BY AND NOTARIZED:

APPLICATION DATA CHECKLIST

Please submit a copy of this form showing items being transmitted.

List all items submitted in the application including maps and site plans.

Project Name: _____

Project Sponsor: _____

- _____ Letter of Transmittal (Division Director)
- _____ Project Narrative
- _____ Environmental Assessment
- _____ Facility Description/Cost Breakout (Part I)
- _____ Budget Information (Part II)
- _____ Project Schedule
- _____ Project Approval Information (Section A & B)
- _____ Governing Body Resolution
- _____ Support Documents (Community Groups, Planning Districts, Etc...)
- _____ Federal Compliance Forms (Minimum 3 Complete Forms)
- _____ Location map
- _____ Site Plan & Maps
- _____ Plat of Site Showing Metes and Bounds
- _____ Department of Historic Resources Letter

FEDERAL COMPLIANCE FORMS

The following forms must be completed for each grant application and must be signed by the designated local representative for the political jurisdiction requesting the grant. Note: These forms are only available in Acrobat PDF format of this document.

- Standard Form (SF)-424,
- Assurances - Construction Programs; OR
- Assurances - Non-Construction Programs,
- Certification - Drug Free Work Place,
- Certification - Regarding Lobbying,
- Certification - Regarding Debarment, Suspension, etc.